

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. COTTON. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. OSSOFF). Without objection, it is so ordered.

NATIONAL CORRECTIONAL OFFICERS AND
EMPLOYEES WEEK

Mr. COTTON. Mr. President, our Nation just concluded National Correctional Officers and Employees Week. Because the Senate was not in session last week, I want to take this opportunity to recognize these heroes and everything they do to protect our people and uphold the rule of law.

Every day, correctional officers go in to work to guard and operate our Federal prisons, State prisons, and local jails. They not only administer justice on behalf of innocent victims, but they also defend the guilty from unjust adversity.

They combat the drug trade so that addicts can recover. They fight back against vicious prison gangs so that inmates can have a chance to find redemption instead of recidivism. They confront the most violent offenders so that persons with short minimum-security prison sentences don't turn out to have what is a death sentence.

Without safety, security, and structure, our prisons and our jails would devolve into anarchy, into chaos, and crime. Correctional officers combat these forces of disorder so that these facilities can instead be centers of self-improvement and, indeed, correction. As a result, many inmates are able to pursue education, learn marketable skills, and find solace in God.

The profession of a correctional officer is both noble and very dangerous. Fewer than 450,000 correctional officers protect and police approximately 1.5 million inmates in a normal year, around the clock, every minute of every day.

Riots, jailbreak attempts, and targeted anti-police violence are common and result in particularly high-risk situations for correctional officers. In a 9-year period measured by the National Institutes of Health, correctional officers suffered over 125,000 work-related injuries and 113 tragically lost their lives.

Correctional officers willingly endure this danger, suffer these injuries, and sometimes give their lives so that our families, neighborhoods, and communities can be safe. The least we can do is to recognize their sacrifice and express our gratitude.

This year, our correctional officers did even more than usual. For the past 14 months, they have worked tirelessly to keep our inmates healthy in the middle of this global pandemic. They shifted normal confinement arrangements, and they maintained order among the population under enhanced stress due to coronavirus protocols.

Correctional officers have done an amazing job and saved so many lives

during this crisis. Sadly, some even paid the ultimate price for their work. They should be proud of their work, and we ought to be proud of them. So from the floor of the U.S. Senate, I certainly can say I am proud of our correctional officers.

But our Nation should go beyond gratitude. We ought to give correctional officers the funding, the wages, the equipment, the facilities, and the support that they need.

To start, Congress can finally crack down on contraband cell phones. Inmates use them to maintain their criminal enterprises from behind bars and to terrorize those who put them there. They also use them to victimize other inmates and to prey upon random victims outside prison walls. In other words, prisoners use these cell phones to undermine the life's work of correctional officers.

Contraband cell phones are even used as tools of retribution against the officers themselves. In 2010, a gang member imprisoned in South Carolina used a contraband cell phone to order the murder of Captain Robert Johnson. Captain Johnson was then mercilessly shot six times in the chest and stomach in his own house. Remarkably, he survived the attack, and he is now a leading advocate for taking action against contraband cell phones.

Regrettably, the use of contraband cell phones shows no sign of slowing. On the contrary, they are becoming ubiquitous weapons inside of our prisons. While available technologies can be helpful, it is also increasingly clear they are not capable of solving the problem alone. So that is why I will soon be reintroducing my Cell Phone Jamming Reform Act. This bill would empower State prisons to install jamming technology and turn contraband cell phones into nothing but useless paper weights. This easy and common-sense step will honor the hard work of correctional officers to clean up our streets and to keep our Nation safe.

The men and women of this country—law-abiding citizens and those who serve their time alike—owe a debt to our Nation's correctional officers. So I, once again, want to thank them for their courageous and diligent service. And I hope they took time last week to celebrate National Correctional Officers and Employees Week because they certainly deserved it.

ABORTION

Mr. President, a few years ago, mainstream news articles trumpeted, supposedly, stunning news out of Scandinavia: Iceland was close to eliminating Down syndrome. Eureka. Fantastic.

How is it possible? Have these Icelandic scientists discovered some amazing and miraculous new gene therapy? No, they hadn't because Iceland wasn't eliminating Down syndrome. Iceland was eliminating babies with Down syndrome using prenatal testing to identify genetic anomalies and then aborting the babies that had those anomalies.

According to one Icelandic genetic counselor—and this is a direct quote. I am not making it up. You might think I am.

We don't look at abortion as murder. We look at it as a thing that we ended.

Imagine, how ghoulish that is. That is what this counselor and some like him believe, that a baby is just a "thing." But if they are honest with themselves, I think if they look into their hearts, they know the truth: Babies with Down syndrome aren't just "things." They are living human beings of inestimable value who are loved by their Creator, even if they aren't protected by the law or valued by too many in society.

Sadly, Iceland is no exception. In many parts of the world, a Down syndrome diagnosis is tantamount to a death sentence. And while in America, thankfully, we are more welcoming, sadly, we still terminate roughly two-thirds of babies diagnosed with this genetic condition. That needs to change.

A civilized nation has a responsibility to protect our most vulnerable people, and that means we have an obligation, especially, to protect unborn babies with Down syndrome.

My home State of Arkansas passed a law to do just that—to make it illegal for an abortionist to perform an abortion if they know it is motivated solely by a Down syndrome diagnosis. You would think this law would be uncontroversial. You would think a country that cares about ending discrimination against people with disabilities would leap at the chance to outlaw a particularly evil and final form of discrimination. After all, this Congress has taken many steps in recent years to protect those with disabilities. But, no, you would be wrong. That is not what happened. The abortion lobby kicked into high gear and got a liberal judge to block Arkansas' pro-life law from going into effect.

The pro-abortion Guttmacher Institute denounced laws to protect babies with Down syndrome as "dangerous and coercive." Now, this should not be surprising coming from the Guttmacher Institute. After all, it is named after a former leader of the American Eugenics Society, as so many abortion advocates can also trace their lineage to the dark, so-called science of eugenics of early last century.

These modern-day eugenicists and a few liberal activist judges are putting babies with Down syndrome at grave risk every day. These babies can find no refuge under the laws of many of our States and our Nation.

But, thankfully, that may be changing. The State of Arkansas is fighting to save its pro-life law in court, and tomorrow, I and Representative ASHLEY HINSON, along with many of my colleagues in Congress, will submit an amicus brief urging the court to protect these most innocent and vulnerable young babies. Time will only tell if the courts will hear these pleas.